

syndicated, rock 'n' roll dance show *Upbeat*. Don Webster hosted the show—the second-longest running show of its kind in history—for seven years. He got to meet just about every rock 'n' roll legend along the way. In fact, *Upbeat* photos of Webster with Jerry Lee Lewis and the Outsiders were included in the "My Town" exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland.

In his 35 years with Channel 5, Don Webster did a little bit of everything—from hosting It's Academic and The Ohio Lottery Show to working in management as station manager. But most people know his true love was delivering weather forecasts, which he's done for more than two decades.

We will miss Don Webster and his familiar presence in our lives, but wish the best for him and his lovely wife, Candace, in their new life in Hilton Head.

TRIBUTE TO BRANDI NICHOLE GASKEY

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, one of the best students in my district, Brandi Nichole Gaskey, has just graduated from Farragut High School.

She has had an amazing four years in high school. She was a member of the National Honor Society all four years, and she was also President of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes her junior and senior year.

Brandi was also involved in sports at Farragut and was voted most athletic, as well.

Mr. Speaker, recently Brandi Gaskey was asked to give the commencement address at Farragut High School. I have attached a copy of her remarks that I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

HOPE THROUGH CHARACTER 1999 GRADUATION ADDRESS

(By Brandi Nichole Gaskey)

Mr. Superintendent, friends, family, distinguished guests, faculty, and fellow graduates of the last class of the century. I stand before you tonight filled with excitement as I welcome you to the 1999 Farragut High School Graduation Ceremony. As we have come to the end of our formal education, to for some of us a miraculous occasion, the question was asked "Does character count?" Although I could not think of one word to define character, I respond with an enthusiastic YES, character does count. I counts for you and me and every person we will ever come in contact with. It counts in a big way through the small things we do or say every day. Character is who you are in the dark, when no one is looking. It's what's on the inside, the gutsy stuff you're made of that no one knows about, but one day every one will see. My pastor, Doug Sager, once said, "your character is your set of values that are non negotiable. It's the quality of life given to you by God to say what is right and to stand up for it." For you see, your character can either make you or break you because everyone has character, it's just a matter of how you choose to develop it. For example, two students at Columbine High School had the character to kill their fellow classmates, while other students at Columbine High School had the character to stand up for their faith no matter what the cost. So I'd

like to share with you today how to develop your character, and exactly why it does count. Moris Mandel tells a story of how the forming of our character is like the forming of an icicle. He concludes that an icicle forms one drop at a time until it is about one foot or two long. If the water was clear, the icicle remains clear and sparkles like diamonds. If the water was muddy, the icicle looks foul and its beauty is spoiled. Just so, our characters are forming one little thought at a time, one little action at a time. In the Bible, in Romans 5:3-4, it states, "Trials make perseverance, perseverance our character, and that character produces hope." Helen Keller also stated, "Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet, it is only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved." Your character is seen and developed through the hard times of life. So I'd like for you to think of an experience that has helped shape your character. I thought about my basketball team, and how Romans 5:3-4 applied to us in so many ways. We had faced so many trials, from a freshman, sophomore, and junior season all with losing records. I thought of countless hours of practice and endless preseason track workouts and sitting in the teamroom after a loss and doing nothing but crying. But those trials taught us perseverance, and we produced character, and that character gave us hope. Hope for this year in which we proudly finished with a winning record of 16-12. Or think of someone you know who has an extreme amount of character. It may be someone who loses their wife and daughter, but still lives life in the best way he can, or someone who works so hard and only makes enough money to feed his/her family. Or someone who fails so many times but keeps on trying and trying again and no one knows how bad they've hurt or hard they've worked. It's studying so hard for an AP Latin test, a math final, or an English exam to realize you make a D, so the next time you study so much harder and finally make the A. Character is all these things. It is formed when you realize you're at your lowest, but hey, you gotta keep on going. So I'd like to challenge you class of 1999 to see each trial you will face as an opportunity to produce and reveal your character. All of these things will "strengthen your soul, clear your vision, inspire your ambition, and you will achieve success" (Helen Keller). Just like the Bible says, your character produces hope. Hope through God that we will make a difference, hope that we are going to be the best future leaders, parents, teachers, ministers, and merchants in the history of our nation, hope that what we do matters, and hope that our character will count in forming a better tomorrow. So be the people of character you are called to be and work daily on strengthening your soul and developing your inner spirit. Margot Isobel once said something that reveals the importance of your true heart and true character. She said, "I think t'would be lovely to live and do good, to grow up to be the girl that I should. A heart full of sunshine and a life full of grace are beauty far better than beauty of face. I think t'would be lovely to make people glad, to cheer up the lonely, discouraged, and sad. What matter if homely or pleasant to see, if lovely in spirit I'm striving to be." So you see your character can make a difference in the lives of others. It's what's on the inside, your inner spirit, it's what you've developed these last 17 or 18 years, what you've persevered through at home and at school, it's your character that counts, and yes, character is essential. So let God guide you through your trials you will face in college, your career, your marriage,

and as a parent, and let those "trials make perseverance, perseverance your character, and let character produce in you hope" (Romans 5:3-4). So I'd like to congratulate you class of 1999. We made it and we finished the ride successfully, but I'd like to leave you with the words of Abraham Lincoln. He said, "Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, and riches take wings. Only one thing endures forever and that is your character." Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL BUSINESS DISASTER ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the purpose of introducing the Small Business Disaster Assistance Act.

This is a two-part proposal that seeks to provide both immediate assistance to viable small businesses and agricultural enterprises when first dealing with the damage wrought by a disaster, and more long-term assistance which seeks to provide them with the needed lift as they continue to work towards normalcy.

My bill creates a program whereby viable small businesses and agricultural enterprises would be eligible for a grant of up to \$30,000 in order to provide them with the immediate assistance they need when dealing with a disaster. Additionally, the bill creates a loan program that acknowledges the great difficulties small business owners and farmers encounter during the first year following a disaster by allowing for a one-year deferral on any repayments toward the loan, and, furthermore, allows the recipient to pay back the principal of that loan before the interest.

This is a compassionate, reasonable proposal that seeks to provide small businesses and farmers with assistance during a time when they need it most. I'd like to thank my colleague from New Jersey, Congressman BOB FRANKS, for his important contribution in drafting this legislation, and I hope that our colleagues will join us in this effort to assist small business owners and farmers whose lives have been fundamentally diminished by natural disaster.

ROMANIA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Romanian Caucus, I rise today to enter into the record remarks in support of Romania. Mr. Speaker, the Heads of State and Government participating in the Istanbul Summit will designate the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the year 2001.

Romania has been fostering support for its candidacy since 1996, when President Emil Constantinescu announced his country's bid for the OSCE Chair in 2001. Romania enjoys U.S. support and has succeeded to build consensus around its candidacy among full OSCE